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## **Sen. Birkholz pleased to see water protection trump politics**

**LANSING** – Measures that would protect the state’s freshwater and groundwater resources by requiring water-discharge permit holders pay an annual fee are expected to be signed into law today, announced Sen. Patty Birkholz, R-Saugatuck Township.

“I’m pleased to see our governor join us in protecting Michigan’s water,” Birkholz said. “It is time to put our residents and resources ahead of politics. Developing this fee structure will allow the state to continue funding and operating these much needed programs.”

Senate Bill 252 establishes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System fund and requires permit holders to pay an application and annual permit fee based on designations from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Senate Bill 560 establishes a fee structure for groundwater discharge. Money collected will be used to fund groundwater monitoring.

“My colleagues and I put a lot of hard work into this legislation to create the best solution for everyone involved,” Birkholz said. “It was an unfair burden for taxpayers to shoulder when it really should be on the permit holders. It is our hope and understanding that these fee permits will allow the DEQ better resources to monitor and run the discharge programs.”

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**Comments from Sen. Birkholz on the water-discharge fees are available for download on the Senate Majority Audiowire at [www.senate.michigan.gov/gop](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop).**